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atmosphere is controlled by controlling a physical quantity of one specific element in the atmosphere so as to inhibit Marangoni convection occurring in the semiconductor melt.

4. (Amended) A melt control method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the one specific element is oxygen.

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5. (Amended) A melt control method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the one specific element is oxygen and an oxygen concentration is controlled on the interface between the crucible and the melt, while an oxygen partial pressure on the melt surface is controlled in the opening of the crucible.

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8. (Amended) A melt control method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the atmosphere covering the melt surface is an argon gas atmosphere having a controlled oxygen partial pressure.

9. (Amended) A melt control method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the oxygen partial pressure is monitored by an oxygen detector and such an oxygen partial pressure is adjusted.

10. (Amended) A melt control method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the oxygen partial pressure is in a predetermined state having a pressure of not less than 1.8×10^{-5} MPa.

11. (Amended) A melt control method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a buoyancy convection other than the Marangoni convection is inhibited.